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MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU

INDIANS AND ENGLISH POETRY

IT may well be asked whether in the evolution of a great national life in this country poetry in the English tongue by Indians has any place at all. There is no doubt that the most permanent and powerful appeal to the higher and diviner emotions in the Indian heart can come only through poetry in the ancient Sanskrit tongue and in the musical and polished vernaculars. The joys of domestic life, the serene happiness of a life of duty, and the raptures of religious emotion can be had better by a study of the *Ramayana* than by a study of any poems in English written or to be written by modern Indians. There are, further, a singular melody and stateliness of sound, a pomp and grandeur of phrase, a mystic perfume of pervasive religious sentiment, in classic Indian poetry which are hard to surpass or rival by any efforts in modern times. Even in modern times poets like Rabindranath Tagore, who has lately been widely praised and generously applauded even in England, have been revealing the possibility of writing great and classic poetry in the modern vernaculars. But high class

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English poetry by Indians has a great and valuable place in individual and national life in India. New thoughts and emotions are stirring in our hearts owing to the wonderful and fateful commingling of the two greatest civilisations of the world. Pan-Indian aspirations, love of the Motherland, a feeling of happy homage to India as the queen of our hearts—these are new-born forces in the Indian world, and crave and seek legitimate and appropriate expression. The conflict of faiths *inter se* and the warfare between Science and Religion have produced among us, as in the West, the torments of spiritual unrest, keen searchings of the heart, an era of religious doubt and gloom. We have got from the West a new conception of chivalrous tenderness towards womanhood and a higher idea of the place of women in national and individual life as the guardian of the higher ethical and emotional elements in man. We have got also a deeper and subtler perception of the beauty of the universe and its message to the human soul. We have further derived from the West newer forms of manliness in thought and word and deed. These and other feelings that we owe to the new commingling of the higher elements of the East and of the West can be best expressed only in the English language having regard to our present-day environ-

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ments, until we build them up into our inner life when they will seek and find vital expression in our beautiful vernaculars. English poetry by Indians has not only this great function but it interprets our life and our emotions to the West. The great duty and privilege of India in the world is to direct the gaze of all men towards the pole-star of spiritual rapture, and the more our Indian thought is presented in beautiful English language to the West, the greater will be the chances of the disappearance of strife and militancy and social and inter-racial unhappiness and of the triumph of peace and love and joy throughout the universe.

The above are some of the new-born artistic ideals that require the use of the English language for perfect and consummate expression. So far as artistic methods are concerned, we have to learn from the West the mastery of the concrete and that great power of terse and direct expression which are the ornaments of style in the West. The intenser imagination of the East has a tendency towards aiming at effect through exaggeration, and we have no doubt that expression of our new-born ideals in the English tongue will lead towards the attainment of that beautiful measure and balance in the expression of thought and emotion which is so frequently seen in the highest English literature. Thus

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there is no doubt that good English poetry by Indians has a great and unique place in the building up of a higher individual and national life in modern India.

LIFE OF MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU

Sarojini Chattopadhayya was born at Hyderabad on 13th February, 1879. Her father, Dr. Aghorenath Chattopadhyaya, is descended from the ancient Brahmin family of Chatterjees of Bhramanagram. He took his degree of Doctor of Science at the University of Edinburgh in 1877, and afterwards had a course of study at Bonn. On his return to India, he founded the Nizam College at Hyderabad, and till his death laboured in the field of education.

Sarojini, the eldest of his children, was given a very good training by her talented father. The following sketch of her father by herself brings out in exquisite prose the characteristics of her father and her deep affection for him. She says :

My ancestors for thousands of years have been lovers of the forest and mountain caves, great dreamers, great scholars, great ascestics. My father is a dreamer himself, a great dreamer, a great man whose life has been a magnificent failure. I suppose in the whole of India there are few men whose learning is greater than his, and I don't think there are many men more beloved. He has a great white beard and the profile of Homer, and a laugh that brings the roof down. He has wasted all his money on two great objects : to help others and on alchemy. He holds

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huge courts every day in his garden of all the learned men of all religions—Rajahs and beggars and saints and downright villains, all delightfully mixed up, and all treated as one. And then, his alchemy! Oh dear, night and day the experiments are going on, and every man who brings a new prescription is welcome as a brother! But this alchemy is, you know, only the material counterpart of a poet's craving for Beauty, the eternal Beauty. 'The makers of gold and the makers of verse,' they are twin creators that sway the world: secret desire for mystery; and what in my father is the genius of curiosity—the very essence of all scientific genius—in me is the desire for beauty. Do you remember Pater's phrase about Leonardo Da Vince, 'curiosity and the desire of beauty'?

Mrs. Sarojini "lisped in numbers for the numbers came." She herself says:

I don't think I had any special hankering to write poetry as a little child, though I was of a very fanciful and dreamy nature. My training under my father's eye was of a sternly scientific character. He was determined that I should be a great mathematician or a scientist, but the poetic instinct, which I inherited from him and also from my mother (who wrote some lovely Bengali lyrics in her youth), proved stronger. One day, when I was eleven, I was sighing over a sum in Algebra: it *wouldn't* come right; but instead a whole poem came to me suddenly. I wrote it down. From that day my 'poetic career' began. At thirteen I wrote a long poem *a la* 'Lady of the Lake'—1,300 lines in six days. At thirteen I wrote a drama of 2,000 lines, a full-fledged passionate thing that I began on the spur of the moment without forethought, just to spite my doctor who said I was very ill and must not touch a book. My health broke down permanently about this time, and my regular studies being stopped I read voraciously. I suppose the greater part of my reading was done between fourteen and sixteen. I wrote a novel, I

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wrote fat volumes of journal; I took myself very seriously in those days.

This long extract shows us how she felt within hereself the stirrings of irrepressible poetic genius early in life. In the case of all truly poetic natures, harmonious expression comes early and naturally in life, because the beauty of the outerworld and the sweetness of the inner kingdoms of love and thought are the vibrations of the Divine element in the universe and cause harmonious vibrations in the Æolian lyres of truly poetic hearts.

Sarojini Chattopadhyaya passed the Matriculation examination of the Madras University in her twelfth year and at once became famous throughout India. She was sent to England in 1895, and stayed in England till 1898, studying first at King's College, London and afterwards at Girton till her health again broke down. During a short period before 1898, she travelled in Italy. Italy with its radiant sunshine and warmth and beauty, Italy the home of Virgil, Dante, and Petrarch—Italy made the mistress of the world of Art by the genius of Raphael and Michael Angelo—stirred her heart by its beauty and its rich legacy of noble memories and artistic achievement. She says:

This Italy is made of gold, the gold of dawn and day-light, the gold of the stars, and now dancing in

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weird enchanting rhythms through this magic month of May the gold of fireflies in the perfumed darkness—'aerial gold.' I long to catch the subtle music of their fairy dances and make a poem with a rhythm like the quick irregular wild flash of their sudden movements. Would it not be wonderful? One black night I stood in a garden with fireflies in my hair like darting restless stars caught in a mesh of darkness. It gave me a strange sensation, as if I were not human at all, but an elfin spirit.

She returned to Hyderabad in September 1898, and in the December of that year married Dr. Naidu though he belonged to a different caste. We have nothing to do in this sketch with the problem of inter-caste marriages, but her bold step shows her love of freedom. She has four children, two sons and two daughters. Her wedded life has been happy and has left her ample leisure to fulfil the great purpose and passion of her life—the dedication of her soul to the service of the Muse of Poetry.

She has recently appeared on various platforms in India and has shown rare talents as a stirring speaker capable of leading our land towards higher stages of national life by the power of her spiritual vision and emotional appeal. In Hyderabad, she is a great social force making for harmony and happiness. The following extract from Diver's *English Woman in India* is an eloquent testimony to this aspect of her life. He says:

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She now lives in Hyderabad, the great veiled city, where the women behind the Purdah are scholars in Persian and Arabic, besides being well read in the best literature of the East. Here Mrs. Naidu holds a unique position, as a link between the English and Indian social elements. ... she lives in a city where poetry is in the air, surrounded by love, beauty and admiration; and her influence behind the Purdah is very great.

As a woman of great beauty and personal charm, as a queen of society, as a sweet-toned and stirring speaker on public platforms, and as a great poet, her life has been a brilliant record of rare achievements.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The representations of her face and figure that are prefixed to her two volumes of poems published in England, *The Golden Threshold* and *The Bird of Time*, do not adequately convey a proper impression of that divine restlessness of nature and hunger for the perception and enjoyment of beauty that are apparent in her mobile face, and her eager eyes that seem to be always in search of forms of beauty in an ideal world. Mr. Arthur Symons says in his Introduction to Mrs. Sarojini's *The Golden Threshold*, "Her eyes were like deep pools, and you seemed to fall through them into depths below depths."

Those who have had the privilege and honour of Mrs. Sarojini's acquaintance know her kindliness of nature and her winning

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graciousness of manner. Her goodness of heart and her love of her people were evident in the way in which she sought to alleviate the misery caused by the recent appalling flood that washed away a large portion of the city of Hyderabad.

SOME ASPECTS OF HER GENIUS

The rare and peculiar elements of Mrs. Sarojini's genius are brought out in Mr. Arthur Symons's Introduction to *The Golden Threshold* with that jewelled beauty of phrase and that pervasive perfume of sentiment that mark the accomplished poet and literary artist. The first aspect of Mrs. Sarojini's genius that deserves admiration is her passionate desire for beauty. To a genuine poet the love of beauty causes an exquisite rapture that is almost an agony, and in his eyes the pursuit of the divine sweetness of the spirit of poesy is the highest thing in life. D. G. Rossette gives expression to this feeling in one of his beautiful sonnets:

> This is that Lady Beauty, in whose praise
> Thy voice and hand shake still,—long known to thee
> By flying hair, and fluttering hem,—the beat
> Following her daily of thy heart and feet,
> How passionately and irretrievably,
> In what fond flight, how many ways and days?

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Mr. Arthur Symons says:

> It was the desire of beauty that made her a poet; her 'nerves of delight' were always quivering at the contact of beauty. To those who knew her in England, all the life of the tiny figure seemed to concentrate itself in the eyes; they turned towards beauty as the sunflower turns towards the sun, opening wider and wider until one saw nothing but the eyes.

Another peculiar characteristic of Mrs. Sarojini's nature is her wonderful physical and nervous organisation which enables her to perceive a radiance of beauty and sweet hints of divinity where familiarity and our coarser texture of mind prevent us from seeing beauty or divinity. Mr. Symons says: "Pain or pleasure transported her, and the whole of pain or pleasure might be held in a flower's cup or the imagined frown of a friend." This wonderful perceptive faculty when coupled with a gift of musical and imaginative utterance goes to make a great poet. Another trait that is noteworthy in her is her humour. This is not noticeable in her poems, but those that have had the honour of her acquaintance know this very well. The most noteworthy element in her nature is that wonderful something that defies analysis, that magic of temperament that is characteristic of the East, that quality which we seek in vain elsewhere. The spirit of inwardness, the power of recognising divine immanence, the love of the spiritual

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aspects of beauty, the passion for peace, the longing for divine communion, the luminous self-poised rapture of contemplation and meditation—in fact, all that the Hindu race as a distinctive race stands for in the realms of higher thought and emotion—find expression in the writings of this gifted poet.

TORU DUTT AND MRS. SAROJINI

Before we enter upon a consideration of Mrs. Sarojini's poems—the works on which her fame rests most securely—it will be interesting to compare her poems and her achievement with a most sweet and winning personality that perished in the bloom of its youth before it could rise into the highest heaven of song—Toru Dutt. It is a curious fact that Edmund Gosse should have been the person that introduced Toru Dutt's poems to the world and wrote an introductory memoir of Toru Dutt. It is Mr. Gosse that has introduced Mrs. Sarojini's volume of poems entitled *The Bird of Time* to the world, and who in Mrs. Sarojini's words "first showed her the way to the Golden Threshold" of poetry. He deserves the sincere praise of all Indians for his sympathetic appreciation of Indian poetic genius and his introduction of it to the Western world. Regarding Toru Dutt, Edmund Gosse says: "When the history of the

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literature of our country comes to be written, there is sure to be a page in it dedicated to this fragile exotic blossom of song." The leading poetic qualities of Toru Dutt's verses are its simplicity, its directness, its sincerity. Her sweet personality disappeared before it could acquire the perfection of mellow sweetness that is the most beautiful ornament of great poetry. The following lyric of Toru Dutt's is characteristic of her genius and is full of beauty and melody.

Still barred thy doors ! The far east glows.
The morning wind blows fresh and free.
Should not the hour that wakes the rose
Awaken also thee ?

All look for thee, Love, Light, and Song,
Light in the sky deep red above,
Song, in the lark of pinions strong,
And in my heart, true Love.

Apart we miss our nature's goal,
Why strive to cheat our destinies ?
Was not my love made for thy soul ?
Thy beauty for mine eyes ?

No longer sleep,
Oh, listen now ?
I wait and weep,
But where art thou ?

Such simplicity of emotional appeal and such artless melody are Toru Dutt's peculiar characteristics as a poet. Mrs. Sarojini's poetic nature and poetic endowment are more complex and subtle than that of Toru Dutt. Another peculiar trait of Toru Dutt as a poet

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is her loving and minute observation of Nature. The following stanza is a fine example of this power of natural descriptions :—

What glorious trees ! The sombre Saul,
On which the eye delights to rest,—
The betel-nut, a pillar tall,
With feathery branches for a crest,—

The light leaved tramarind spreading wide,—
The pale faint-scented bitter neem,
The Seemul, gorgeous as a bride,
With flowers that have the ruby's gleam.

The following sonnet is equally beautiful :—

A sea of foliage girds our garden round,
But not a sea of dull unvaried green,
Sharp contrasts of all colours here are seen ;
The light-green graceful tamarinds abound.

Amid the mangoe clumps of green profound.
And palms arise like pillars grey between,
And o'er the quiet pools the Seemuls lean
Red,—red, and startling like a trumpet's sound.

But nothing can be lovelier than the ranges
Of bamboos to the eastward, when the moon
Looks through their graps, and the white lotus [changes
Into a cup of silver. One might swoon
Drunken with beauty then, or gaze and gaze
On a primeval Eden, in a amaze.

Skilful as Mrs. Sarojini is in the description of natural scenery and its appeal to the soul, the artless naturalness of the above descriptions has a profound charm that is hard to surpass in Mrs. Sarojini's poems. A further characteristic of Toru Dutt's poems is their intense hold upon the life and aspirations of

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the East as disclosed in the beautiful stories and legends from India's glorious past. Mrs. Sarojini's poems are more various and more modern in their appeal, but Toru Dutt's *Savitri*, *Lakshman*, *Jogadhya Uma*, *The Royal Ascetic*, *Dhruva*, *Prehlad* form a wonderful series of poems that give us a glimpse of the passionate beating of India's heart. So far as metrical skill and command of suggestive and melodious verse are concerned, Mrs. Sarojini must be placed far above Toru Dutt. Mrs. Sarojini has a wonderful command over many and varied metrical forms, and the melody and rhythmic graces of her poetry are marvellous. The genius of Toru Dutt is to that of Mrs. Sarojini what the jasmine is to the rose—the jasmine that finds its most congenial home in the East, that has got a charming simplicity and beauty of appearance, that wears the artless grace of budding maidenhood in the realm of flowers, that is full of a delicate though sweet fragrance—to the rose that finds a happy home in the West as well as the East, that has a queenly pomp and pageantry of colour and beauty, that has the mellow sweetness and charm of perfect womanhood in the realm of flowers, that commands homage by its regal loveliness, that has a pervasive and powerful perfume that bears our fancies away to a world of mystic inner happiness.

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CHARACTERISTICS OF MRS. NAIDU'S POETRY

Mr. Edmund W. Gosse points out in his introduction to Mrs. Sarojini's volume of verse entitled *The Bird of Time* how Mrs. Sarojini's earliest efforts in verse were Western in feeling and in imagery and were founded on reminiscences of Tennyson and Shelley, and how he induced her to drop this falsely English vein. The following extract from his introduction is valuable not only because of its beauty of style but of the insight it gives us into the growth of Mrs. Sarojini's art. He says :

I implored her to consider that from a young Indian of extreme sensibility, who had mastered not merely the language but the prosody of the West, what we wished to receive was, not a *rechauffe* of Anglo-Saxon sentiment in Anglo-Saxon setting, but some revelation of the heart of India, some sincere penetrating analysis of native passion, of the principles of antique religion and of such mysterious intimations as stirred the soul of the East long before the West had begun to dream that it had a soul. Moreover, I entreated Sarojini to write no more about robins and skylarks, in a landscape of our midland countries, with the village bells somewhere in the distance calling the parishioners to church, but to describe the flowers, the fruits, the trees, to set her poems firmly among the mountains, the gardens, the temples, to introduce to us the vivid populations of her own voluptuous and unfamiliar province; in other words, to be a genuine Indian poet of the Deccan, not a clear machine-made imitator of the English classics. With the docility and the rapid appreciation of genius, Sarojini instantly accepted and with as little delay as possible acted upon this suggestion. Since 1895, she has

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written, I believe, no copy of verses which endeavours to conceal the exclusively Indian source of her inspiration. She springs from the very soil of India; her spirit, although it employs the English language as its vehicle, has no other tie with West.

The first characteristic that we have to note in regard to Mrs. Sarojini's verse is the predominance of the lyric element in them. Her poems are mostly "short swallow-flight of song." Some are full of the rapture of Spring. Some lead us into a world of inner ecstacy and spiritual emotion. Others are quivering with the passion of love. Some others lead us with eager hands into the heaven of India's luminous past. The lyric appeal is various and wonderful and full of the magic of melody. The following song entitled *The Song of Princess Zeb-un-Nisa in Praise of Her Own Beauty* has a music and sweetness all its own :—

When from my cheek I lift my veil,
The roses turn with envy pale,
And from their pierced hearts, rent with pain,
Send forth their fragrance like a vail.

Or if perchance some perfumed tress
Be loosened to the wind's caress,
The honeyed hyacinths complain,
And languish in a sweet distress.

And, when I pause still groves among,
(Such loveliness is mine) a throng
Of nightingales awake and strain
Their souls into a quivering song.

The following Spring lyric has a haunting sweetness and exquisite metrical charm :—

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Springtime, O Springtime, what is your essence,
The lilt of a bulbul, the laugh of a rose,
The dance of the dew on the wings of a moonbeam,
The voice of the Zephyr that sings as he goes,
The hope of a bride or the dream of a maiden
Watching the petals of gladness unclose?

Springtime, O Springtime, what is your secret,
The bliss at the core of your magical mirth,
That quickens the pulse of the morning to wonder
And hastens the send of all beauty to birth,
That captures the heavens and conquers to blossom
The roots of delight in the heart of the earth?

The deep religious emotion that abides in the poem, *To a Buddha seated on a Lotus* has a noble and uplifting effect. The opening stanza is as follows:—

Lord Buddha, on thy Lotus-throne,
With praying eyes and hands elate,
What mystic rapture dost thou own,
Immutable and ultimate?
What peace, unravished of our ken,
Annihilate from the world of men?

Here is a perfect love lyric:

Cover mine eyes, O my Love!
Mine eyes that are weary of bliss,
As of light that is poignant and strong;
O silence my lips with a kiss,
My lips that are weary of song!
Shelter my soul, O my Love!
My soul is bent low with the pain
And the burden of love, like the grace
Of a flower that is smitten with rain;
Oh shelter my soul from thy face!

As significant and valuable as this wonderful volume and sweetness of lyric appeal and achievement is Mrs. Sarojini's lyric rendering of Indian folk songs. These folk songs written

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by Mrs. Sarojini show how fully she has entered into the innermost life of the Indian's heart. The various joys and sorrows that thrill and agitate an Indian's heart from the day when his eyes open on this beautiful earth till his eyes are closed by the hands of death are all described in sweet and musical and passionate verses by the gifted poetess. The following stanza from her poem *In Praise of Henna* can be well appreciated by those who have had an insight into the sweet and gracious ways and habits of Indian maidens :—

A Kokila called from a Henna spray :
Lira ! Liree ! Lira ! Liree !
Hasten maidens, hasten away.
To gather the leaves of the Henna tree,

The *tilka's* red for the brow of a bride,
And betel-nut's red for lips that are sweet ;
But, for lily-like fingers and feet,
The red, the red of the Henna tree.

There is a subtle grace in the following lines from her *Indian Love Song* :—

Like a serpent to the calling voice of flutes,
Glides my heart into thy fingers, O my love !
Like the perfume in the petals of a rose,
Hides thy heart within my bosom. O my love !

Her poem entitled, *A Cradle-Song*, has an inimitable appropriateness and sweetness. We quote here only the first stanza of it :

From groves of spice,
O'er fields of rice,
Athward the lotus-stream,

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I bring for you.
Aglint with dew
A little lovely dream.

We shall quote lastly the exquisite poem about *Suttee :*

Lamp of my life, the lips of death
Have blown thee out with their sudden breath,
Naught shall revive thy vanished spark. . . .
Love, must I dwell in the living dark ?

Tree of my life, death's cruel foot
Hath crushed thee down to thy hidden root,
Naught shall restore thy glory fled. . . .
Shall the blossom live when the tree is dead ?

Life of my life, Death's bitter sword
Hath severed us like a broken word,
Rent us in twain who are but one.
Shall the flesh survive when the soul is gone ?

Another trait that we must note in Mrs. Sarojini's poetical nature is her subtle perception of delicate and evanescent shades of feeling and ecstacy and the rendering of such emotions in verses that have a magic vagueness and sweetness and seem to allow us to have a peep through

Magic casement opening on the foam
Of perilous seas in fairy lands forlorn.

The following couplets from *Humayun to Zobeida* suggest a sweet mystical side of the passion of love :—

You haunt my waking like a dream, my slumber
like a moon,
Pervade me like a musky scent, possess me like a
tune.
Shall any foolish veil divide my longing from my
bliss ?

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Shall any fragile curtain hide your beauty from my kiss?
What war is this of *Thee* and *Me*? Give o'er the wanton strife,
You are the heart within my heart, the life within my life.

Here is an exquisite stanza from *The Dance of Love*:

The music sighs and slumbers,
It stirs and sleeps again.....
Hush, it wakes and weeps and murmurs
Like a woman's heart in pain;
Now it laughs and calls and coaxes,
Like a lover in the night,
Now it parts with sudden longing,
Now it sobs with spend delight.

There are numerous single lines and stanzas scattered throughout her poems that thrill us with new and mystical, but true and sincere, renderings of sweet and noble emotions. The following are but a few of them:—

"The wind lies asleep in the arms of the dawn like a child that has cried all night."

"Thread with mellow laughter the petals of delight."

"But in the desolate hour of midnight, when
An ecstacy of starry silence sleeps
Oh the still mountains and the soundless deeps,
And my soul hungers for thy voice, O, then,
Love like the magic of wild melodies,
Let thy soul answer mine across the seas!"

"The fragrant peace of the twilight's breath,
And the mystic silence that men call death."

"Revive me, I pray, with the magical nectar that dwells in the flower of thy kiss."

"O hushed the eager feet that knew the steep
And intricate ways of ecstasy and sighs!

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And dumb with alien slumber, din and deep,
The living heart that was love's paradise."

"Alone, O Love, I breast the shimmering waves,
The changing tides of life's familiar streams.
Wide seas of hope, swift rivers of desire.
The moon-enchanted estuary of dreams.
"But no compassionate wind or comforting star
Brings me sweet word of thine abiding place.—
In what predestined hour of joy or tears
Shall I attain the sanctuary of thy face?"

"What tender ecstacy of prayer and praise
Or lyric flower of my impassioned days?!'

"But now, in the memoried dusk you seem
The glimmering ghost of a by-gone dream.',

We might quote many more lines and stanzas but have to stop with the above in this sketch lest it should outgrow all reasonable bounds of space.

The next aspect of Mrs. Sarojini's poetry that deserves consideration is the character of her Nature poetry. To her, Nature does not convey incommunciable message of peace and joy and inner illumination. Nature is to her what it was to Tennyson—a back ground for the portraiture of human emotions. But the ecstacy of the heart that wakes into being at the sight of the loveliness of the world is beautifully expressed in words that thrill with a passion of happiness in Mrs. Sarojini's verses. The following are two beautiful stanzas from her *Champak Blossoms* :—

Only to girdle a girl's dark tresses
Your fragrant hearts are uncurled;

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Only to garland the vernal breezes
Your fragile stars are unfurled.

You make no boast in your purposeless beauty
To serve or profit the world.
Yet, 'tis of you thro' the moonlit ages
That maidens and minstrels sing.

And lay your buds on the great god's altar,
O radiant blossoms that fling
Your rich, voluptuous, magical perfume
To ravish the winds of Spring.

The following passage is equally beautiful and illustrative of her attitude towards Nature. It is from her poem on *Ecstacy* :—

Shall we in the midst of life's exquisite chorus
Remember our grief,
O'heart, when the rapturous season is o'er us
Of blossom and leaf?
Their joy from the birds and the streams let us borrow,
O heart! let us sing,
The years are before us for weeping and sorrow. . . .
To-day it is Spring!

MRS. NAIDU'S PATRIOTISM

One of the most pleasing and noble characteristics of Mrs. Sarojini's poetry is the passionate love of our beloved Motherland that throbs in them. At a time when the inhabitants of this land are fired by the idea of a happy and united Motherland—of India crowned with the Himalayas and with her lotus feet washed by the adoring ocean, it would be an anomaly if the most gifted poet of the age should not feel the passion of love of India in her heart and give it tuneful and

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uplifting utterance. The following poem *To India* is worth quoting and remembering:—

O young through all thy immemorial years!
Rise, mother, rise, regenerate from thy gloom,
And, like a bride high-mated with the spheres,
Beget new glories from thy ageless womb!

The nations that in fettered darkness weep
Crave thee to lead them where great mornings break,
Mother, O Mother, wherefore dost thou sleep!
Arise and answer for thy children's sake!

Thy future calls thee with a manifold sound
To crescent honours, splendours, victories vast;
Waken, O slumbering Mother and be crowned,
Who once were Empress of the Sovereigin Past.

THE FUNCTIONS OF POETRY

Another excellent trait of her poetry is the high and exalted view sketches of the function of poesy in life. She has an assured belief in the poet's great mission in this world. In her poem entitled *In the Forest*, she says:

But soon we must rise, O my heart, we must
wander again
Into the war of the world and the strife of the throng;
Let us rise. O my heart, let us gather the dreams
that remain,
We will conquer the sorrow of life with the sorrow
of song.

Having considered thus far the qualities of Mrs. Sarojini's poetic matter and her poetic-ideals, we shall proceed to consider the qualities of her poetic form. The first quality that deserves our attention is what has been stated prominently in Arthur Symons' Introduction

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to *The Golden Threshold* as the "bird-like quality of song." There is a thorough air of naturalness, freedom, and delight about her songs and lyrics. She seems to be and it seems

Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air,

as if

With her clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be.

The following stanza from her poem entitled *To My Fairy Fancies* seems to embody her spirit's soaring into a higher heaven of thought and feeling than is given to others :—

Nay, no longer I may hold you,
In my spirits' soft caresses,
Not like lotus-leaves enfold you
In the tangles of my tresses.
Fairy fancies, fly away!
To the white cloud-wildernesses,
Fly away!

MRS. NAIDU'S POETIC STYLE

The next characteristic of her poetic style that deserves to be noted is her exquisite melody of rhythm and consummate mastery of metrical form. She has tried many metres and has succeeded in all of them. One of her favourite metrical devises is the introduction of anapæstic feet in the middle of iambic measures. To do this successfully one should have an unerring ear for the finest cadences and harmonies of language. This device enables her to give a lilt to her song, and a

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quickness of movement, that are exquisitely melodious and delightful to trained ears. The following is an excellent example of her method:—

Our lays are of cities whose lustre is shed,
The laughter and beauty of women long dead
The sword of old battles, the crown of old kings,
And happy and simple and sorrowful things.

Her mastery of ever complex and long metrical structures is apparent from her poem as *The Indian Dancers*. We quote here only one stanza from it:

The scents of red roses and sandalwood flutter
and die in the maze of their gem-tangled hair
And smiles are entwining like magical serpents the
poppies of lips that are opiate-sweet;
Their glittering garments of purple are burning like
tremulous dawns in the quivering air,
And exquisite, subtle and slow are the tinkle and
tread of their rhythmical and slumber-soft feet.

She has not attempted much in blank verse or in the sonnet form as yet. But her poems exhibit a marvellous melody and rhythmical grace, and cling to the mind long after they are read.

Like memory of music fled
Like aught that for its grace may be
Dear and yet dearer for its mystery.

Further, we should have an adequate recognition of her jewelled beauty of phrase, and her subtle magic of imaginative temperament that makes her illuminate by a single flash of epithet a world of new ideas and

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feelings and unfamiliar relations between familiar things and spiritual meanings and joys in facts which convey no messages to ordinary ears. A few illustrations of her illuminating epithets and ideas are given below :

"She sways like a flower in the wind of our song"
"To the koil-haunted river-isles where lotus lilies [glisten"
"Of bridal-songs and cradel-songs and sandal-scent-[ed leisure"
"Your ancient forests hoard and hold
The legends of their centuried sleep"
"An ecstacy of starry silence sleeps
On the still mountains and the soundless deeps"
"And faith that dreams of a tarrying morn,
The fragrant peace of the twilight's breath."
"The moonless vigils of her lonely night"
"Winged dreams that blow their golden clarion,
And hope that conquers immemorial hate"
"Fireflies weaving aerial dances
In fragile rhythms of flickering gold."

CHARACTERISTIC INDIAN IMAGERIES

Another characteristic of Mrs. Sarojini's poetic style that has to be noted is the exclusively Indian character of the imagery and sentiment that pervade her poems. Her poems are full of beautiful reminiscences from ancient poetry and legends, and references to the beautiful customs and habits that rule Indian modes of thought and action. The following is an admirable illustration of this aspect of her genius. It is from her poem *Leili:*

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A caste mark on the azure brows of Heaven,
The golden moon burns sacred, solemn, bright,
The winds are dancing in the forest-temple,
And swooning at the holy feet of Night.
Hush! in the silence mystic voices sing,
And make the gods their incense-offering.

There are beautiful instances of appropriate and attractive Indian imagery everywhere in her poems, but we shall content ourselves with the following in this sketch :—

Lo ! he sees,
Like a strange, fated bride as yet unknown,
His timid future shrinking there alone,
Beneath her marriage-veil of mysteries.

We do not think that it would be out of place if we examine here the limitations of Mrs. Sarojini's art so far as can be gathered from her published poems and to suggest that she should give us works of beauty in new forms and on new poetic subjects which have not yet been attempted by her. Her new and emotional renderings of the great and inspiring legends of the past are not simple or natural or in harmony with the most intimate Indian sentiment on the matter. The following is an extract from her poem *Damayanti to Nala on the Hour of Exile* :—

O King, thy Kingdom who from thee can wrest ?
What fate shall dare uncrown three from this breast,
O god-born lover, whom my love doth gird
And armour with impregnable delight
Of Hope's triumphant keen flame-carven sword?

If we compare this with the second part of Kalidasa's Meghaduta or Sita's Message to her

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beloved from the Asoka forest, we can well realise how, in spite of gorgeous diction and imagery, Mrs. Sarojini's poem is not real in tone or sentiment and is full of mingled reminiscences from the West—from the ideals of chivalry, from modern poets like Eric Mackay who speaks of lover as having been

Crowned with a kiss and sceptred with a joy.

Mrs. Sarojini may have intended these modern renderings of old legends not to be entirely antique in spirit, but we should remember that such renderings are not like the English renderings of Greek legends or modern renderings of the mediæval tales of chivalry. These refer to dead ideals and have to be vitalised by modern conceptions. Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* is the most famous illustration of this method. But the ideals embodied in the glorious events of India's past are yet living ideals. It is a great task to embody the highest aspects of these ideals in noble verse, and we wish that Mrs. Sarojini will do this work and give it to the world. Again, Mrs. Sarojini has not given us beautiful poems in blank verse or in the sonnet form. Nor has she written any poems of considerable length. If she will take up work on these lines and apply to them her imagination so richly stored with beautiful conceptions, so plastic, and so original, we have no doubt

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that she will be able to give to the world works of enduring charm and power and be a light and an inspiration to men and women everywhere in the world.

MRS. SAROJINI'S POEMS

Apart from single poems contributed to the various leading reviews and magazines in India, she has published three volumes of poems—*The Golden Threshold*, *The Bird of Time* and *The Broken Wing*. I have dealt at some length already with the great qualities of her poetic achievement. *The Bird of Time* displays a greater command over beauty of phrase and melody of verse than *The Golden Threshold;* and a deeper passionateness of thought and a more vivid sense of the mingled joy and pathos of life breathe in it than in the earlier volume of poems. We do not find in her art that note of profound symbolism and mysticism that brings to us sweet hints of paradise as in the poems of Sir Rabindranath Tagore. The peculiarly Indian note of the quest of Infinite Beauty and Love by the soul, going on such holy pilgrimage in life after life, is seldom heard in her sweet poetry. I have shown further how her genius, while having lyrical charm and power, lacks those qualities that contribute to real supremacy of epic and dramatic achievement. But yet with all the limitations

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of her art, she is one of the greatest of the Indian poets of this century. Her recent election to a membership of the Royal Society of Literature in England shows in what esteem her art is held by the great literary men of England. Both East and West have learnt to admire her true lyrical gift which achieves the rare union of melodious picturesqueness and uplifting emotion, her delicacy and splendour of rhythmic expression and her never-failing sense of beauty.

MRS. SAROJINI ABOUT HERSELF

Two poems of hers reveal her very soul and show the peculiar gifts and graces of her poetic endowment, and I quote them here as they describe in beautiful verse what I have been trying to describe and explain in this sketch:

To priests and to prophets,
The joy of their creeds
To kings and their cohorts
The glory of their deeds,
And peace to the vanquished,
And hope to the strong...
For me, Oh! my master,
The rapture of song.

Into the strife of the throng and the tumult,
The war of sweet Love against folly and wrong;
Where brave hearts carry the sword of battle,
Tis mine to carry the banner of song,
The solace of faith to the lips that falter,
The succour of hope to the hands that fail.
The tidings of joy when Peace shall triumph,
When Truth shall conquer and Love prevail

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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL WORK

For some years past, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu has been participating freely in social and political work and lecturing frequently in various places. Some think that this has led to her comparative sterility of poetic accomplishment for many years past and disapprove of her seeking "fresh fields and pastures new." But her contributions towards the evolution of a higher social and political life in India are valuable in themselves though they have certainly had the result pointed out above.

MRS. SAROJINI AS A SPEAKER

Mrs. Sarojini's public utterances on various platforms are all characterised by an intense patriotism and a desire for national upheaval. The following extract from a report of her speech on "The Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man" at the Theistic Conference held at Madras some years ago speaks for itself :—

Religion was the crown of life, and while other forms of life and activity were legitimate occupation for the talents and energies of man, the spiritual and moral uplifting of the nation was a duty and a responsibility for every one of them and deserved to be looked at from a large and a broader view than the narrow groove of mere personality; their action, even in small spheres, as small and insignificant as any in creation, produced a wave of happiness and bliss in the larger ocean of humanity. They occupied a definite and unique plan in the scheme of national life and national progress, and she would beg of them,

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as their sister, to accept their responsibilities as men and work for the spiritual, moral, and intellectual enlightenment of their race of both sexes.

MESSAGE TO STUDENTS

She said in an eloquent address to the Historical Society, Pachaiyappa's College :

You have inherited great dreams. You have had great duties laid upon you. You have been bequeathed legacies for whose suffrage and whose growth and accumulation you are responsible. It does not matter where you are and who you are. Even a sweeper of streets can be a patriot. You can find in him a moralising spirit that can inspire your mind. There is not one of you who is so humble and so insignificant that you can evade the duties that belong to you, that are predestined to you, and which nobody but you can perform. Therefore each of you is bound to dedicate his life to the uplifting of his country,

First and foremost is her message to the vast student population of India. She has always tried to lead them to purer and more strenuous lives for the sake of our beloved Motherland. In an address delivered on 5th July, 1915, at Guntur, she said :—

"You know that the students' movement is so much a vital power of the every-day life of the people that one cannot conceive of the future in which the students' ideal, the students' capacity for service does not count for the most inspiring factor in National life."

WOMANHOOD IN INDIA

Her message to the womanhood of India is equally noble and valuable. She said at the Indian Ladies' Club at Pithapuram :—

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"It is the motherhood of a nation that alone is the authentic measure of its work and capacity. . . . So shall the great mother be served by her millions of daughters in whom, thank God, survives the immortal spirit of Sita and Savitri, and the heroic and heavenly women of our ancient legend and history."

In regard to social ideals generally, she has, while advocating change and progress to make India modern in every way, realised that our great racial ideals should be preserved. In her address, on 21st August, 1915, at the Students' Brotherhood, Bombay, she said: "Human souls and human destinies were guided and moulded and shaped by the special race-consciousness and race-ideals to which they belonged."

SIR P. M. MEHTA

Her insight into the natures of other great leaders and inspirers of India's social and national life is remarkable. She said of the late Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, on 28th November, 1915: "Who can sufficiently extol the sweetness of the man and that invulnerable sense of chivalry? Who will sum up the tenderness of his heart that made him the champion of women? Who will sum up his chivalry, the grace of head and heart that was so rarely combined in him. He was the golden link between the experience of the older and the enthusiasm of the younger generation."

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G. K. GOKHALE

In regard to the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale, she said that "the generations are linked together by the continuity of ideals and a common love, inspired by a great and selfless spirit," and she spoke of "the sublime lesson he always taught, that no gift is more fine or fruitful than personal service [illegible] by personal love."

MR. GANDHI'S GREATNESS

She recognises in Mr. Gandhi "a lineal descendant of those great sons of compassion who became the servants of humanity—Gautama Buddha, Chaitanya, Ramanuja, Ramakrishna."

He lacks, may be, the breadth and height and ecstacy of their mystical attainment: but he is not less than theirs in his intensity of love, his sincerity of service and a lofty simplicity of life which is the austere flower of renunciation and self-sacrifice.

He has mastered the secret of real greatness and learnt that true Yoga is wisdom in action and that love is the fulfilling of the law.

MRS. GANDHI

In a letter to Lady Mehta in February, 1915, she wrote of Mrs. Gandhi:—

She sat by her husband's side, simple and serene and dignified in the hour of triumph as she had proved herself simple and serene and dauntless in the hour of trial and tragedy.

I have a vision too of her brave, frail, pain-worn hand which must have held aloft the lamp of he

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country's honour undimmed in one alien land, working at rough garments for wounded soldiers in another.

The great South African leader who, to quote Mr. Gokhale's apt phrase, had moulded heroes out of clay, was reclining, a little ill and weary, on the floor eating his frugal meal of nuts and fruit (which I shared) and his wife was busy and content as though she were a mere modest housewife absorbed in a hundred details of household service, and not the world famed heroine of a hundred noble sufferings in a nation's cause.

SPEECHES ON SELF-GOVERNMENT

Though she cannot lay claim to have mastered the maze of Indian politics, her speeches have always been a trumpet-call to patriotism. At the Lucknow Congress, in 1916, she delivered a stirring speech while supporting the resolution on Self-Government for India. In the course of it, she said :

"I am merely a spectator from the watch-tower of dreams; and I watched the swift and troubled, sometimes checquered but neverthless indomitable, time-spirit marching on in a pageant of triumphs to the desired goal. . . . We stand united, but united with such strength that nothing from outside, not even the tyranny of Colonial domination, shall withhold from us our rights and privileges, withhold from us the liberties that are due, which we claim by our united voice. . . . Centuries have gone by, the old divisions are healed, old wounds have got cured. . . . To each of us has come that living consciousness, that it is united service for the Motherland that constitutes the uppermost hope of to-morrow. There is no one so mean, so weak, so selfish as not to think that in the service of the Motherland lies the joy greater than all personal joys, in suffering for her comes the supermost consolation in our personal sorrow and in her worship is the absolution of sin, to live for her is the most victorious triumph of life, to

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die for her is to achieve the priceless crown of immortality."

SPEECHES ON INDENTURED LABOUR

Soon after the Lucknow Congress, Mrs. Naidu made a tour round the country delivering political speeches at different places. Her speech on Indentured Labour* delivered before a large gathering at Allahabad in January, 1917, had a great effect in rousing the public to a knowledge of the iniquities of the system. As a woman, she pleaded for her sex with an eloquence that should have gone home to every listener.

Let the blood of your hearts blot out the shame that your women have suffered abroad. The words that you have heard to-night must have kindled within you a raging fire. Men of India, let that be the funeral pyre of the indenture system. *(Applause.)* Words from me to-night! No, tears from me to-night, because I am a woman, and though you may feel the dishonour that is offered to your mothers and sisters, I feel the dishonour offered to me in the dishonour to my sex.

And so on with apt allusions to Sita of the Ramayana and Padmini of Chittore down to the latest of women martyrs—Mrs. Gandhi. She concluded :—

Is national righteousness possible when the men of India sit still and see such crimes? Is national righteousness possible till every man amongst you becomes a soldier of the cause, a devotee, a fanatic,

* For full text of this Speech, See Speeches and Writings of Sarojini Naidu. G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.

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everything and anything which means destruction of the wrong and triumph of the right. Gentlemen, it is a stormy sea that we have to cross, a storm-tossed sea in a crowded boat that may or may not stand the burden of our sorrow, but like Khusru of old shall we not say, even when the night is dark, when the waves are high, when there is a rush in the boat when there is no pilot with us, shall we not say—

What though there be no pilot to our boat? Go, tell him, we need him not. God is with us and we need no pilot.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

But the subject to which she reverts again and again in all her discourses is one that she is peculiarly fitted to speak about—the Hindu-Muslim Unity. She seldom misses an opportunity to expatiate on the supreme need of union among the members of these two great communities. Tradition and history have not only made it possible but inevitable. She said at a meeting in Patna in October, 1917:—

Centuries ago when the first Islamic army came to India, they pitched their caravans on the banks of the sacred Ganges and tempered and cooled their swords in the sacred waters. It was the baptism of the Ganges that gave the first welcome to the Islamic invaders that became the children of India as generations went by. And to-day, in speaking of the Hindu-Muslim Unity, we should bear in mind that historic circumstance, that historic culture, that historic evolution for which the Gangetic valley has stood in bringing about the Hindu-Muslim relationship age after age.

"In this great country," she continued:—

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The Muslims came to make their home not to carry spoils and to go back to their own home but to build permanently here their home and create a new generation for the enrichment of the Motherland. How can they live separate from the people of the soil? Does history say that in the past they have so lived separate? Or rather it says that once having chosen to take up their abode in this land they became the children of the soil, the very flesh of our flesh and blood of our blood.

IDEALS OF ISLAM

Mrs. Naidu holds that it was the religion of Islam that built up political empires and she has great faith that the genius of Islam will still be exerted in the direction of a true democracy in India because, as she said in a speech on the Ideals of Islam delivered at Madras before the Muslim Association in December, 1917:—

It was the first religion that preached and practised democracy, for, in the mosque when the minaret is sounded and the worshippers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when the peasant and the king kneel side by side and proclaim, "God alone is great." I have been struck over and over again by this indivisible unity of Islam that makes a man instinctively a brother. When you meet an Egyptian, an Algerian, an Indian and a Turk in London, what matters that Egypt was the Motherland of one and India the Motherland of another? It was this great feeling of Brotherhood, this great sense of human justice that was the gift of Akbar's rule to India.

And then she goes on to explain the meaning of fasts and pilgrimages and the position of women in Muslim society with a know-

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ledge born of intimate contact with the working of the Islamic polity. She explains also how she came to be so intimately acquainted with Islam and its ways, an acquaintance which entitles her to speak with authority on the Hindu-Muslim problem :—

I come from the premier Mussalman city in India. The premier Mussalman power in India rules over the city from which I come, and there the tradition of Islam has truly been carried out for two hundred years, that tradition of democracy that knows how out of its legislation to give equal rights and privileges to all the communities whose destinies it controls. The first accents I heard were in the tongue of Amir of Kusru. All my early associations were formed with the Mussalman men and Mussalman women of my city. My first playmates were Mussalman children.

HINDU CIVILIZATION

In December, 1917, she delivered a series of addresses in Madras. But the one made under the auspices of the Madras Students' Convention deserves more than a passing notice. It was entitled "The Hope of Tomorrow"—being an exhortation to young men. Speaking of the vitality of the Indian civilization, she observed :—

What was it that made India great ? What was it that gave opportunities to her genius to find such manifold and immortal expression ? It was that India was true to herself. She believed that the only authentic expression of the Nation springs from within the soul of the Nation; and though a Nation must absorb all that is beautiful in other civilisations and in other ages, it can only be enriched by a foreign civilisation

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but not dominated by alien things. After all these thousands of years, we find perennial and beautiful that great treasure of intellect and spirit that is ours that we do not remember as ours. Those philosophies are alive to-day. They have out-lasted time, because that philosophy was the evolution of the proven thought of India. Her religion lives to-day, and even as five thousand years ago on the banks of the Ganges the hymns of ancient Vedas were chanted, so to-day we de-nationalised pilgrims, that go to the Ganges hear the self-same chant, and there not only by the water of the Ganges are our spiritual sins absolved but they purify instinctively all our intellectual transgressions.

THE IDEAL OF CO-OPERATION

During her stay in Madras, she was invited to attend the first Annual Conference of the Madras Presidency Association where she moved the following resolution :—

"That this Conference would appeal to the various communities of South India to sink their local differences in this supreme moment in the history of India and sincerely co-operate with one another for the general uplift of the Motherland."

It was but fitting that she who has always sought for that unity which this resolution embodies, should have been chosen to move it. She held out the ideal of co-operation and explained the true meaning of the ancient division of castes :—

Why should there be division between caste and caste? What was the meaning, the purpose, the significance, and the power of the caste division in the old days? What was it but a division of labour for the glory of the Motherland, so that each within his own sphere could contribute perfect service that

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should enrich the wide diversity of life? It was to build up, to create and foster national culture and national consciousness. Was that great system subtly built of a knowledge of human functions and possibilities meant to bring division? Were the law makers enemies of their Motherland that they brought about this division of sects and castes? No. It was built up so that India might be served, each community honouring itself and finding its perfect expression through some service which would be best suited to its own way of thought, to its own capacity of achievement, its own sources of inspiration and its own opportunity of realisation. Have we grown so civilised that we have become untrue to our own social, intellectual and spiritual principles? (*Cheers.*) Have we become so alienated from the inner meanings of our evolution that what was meant to be a source of richer unity has become to-day a source of disunion, disintegration, degradation that affected the honour and progress of the Motherland?

SPEECHES AT CALCUTTA & BOMBAY

At the Calcutta Congress she supported the Self-Government resolution in a lucid little speech. She also spoke at the Muslim League in support of the resolution demanding the release of the Ali Brothers.

She attended the Bombay Provincial Conference at Bijapore where she moved the resolution on Women Franchise in India.

MADRAS PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE

She was soon after invited to preside over the Madras Provincial Conference held at Conjeevaram in May 1918. She delivered an extempore address urging the men to enroll themselves in the service of the Empire. She

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made a very impressive speech which she concluded with a defence of her entry into the political arena from the sanctuary of poetry and dreams. She said :—

Standing before you to-day, I feel a thrill of pride to say that henceforth I am not only with you but of you, for, in this great city, I have seen once more the Vision Beautiful to which my life is dedicated. Often and often have they said to me: "Why have you come out of the ivory tower of dreams to the market place? Why have you deserted the pipes and flute of the poet to be the most strident trumpet of those who stand and call the Nation to battle?" Because the function of a poet is not merely to be isolated in ivory towers of dreams set in a garden of roses, but his place is with the people; in the dust of the highways, in the difficulties of battle is the poet's destiny. The one reason why he is a poet is that in the hour of danger, in the hour of defeat and despair, the poet should say to the dreamer: "If you dream true, all difficulties, all illusions, all despair are but *Maya*: the one thing that matters is hope. Here I stand before you with your higher dreams, your invisible courage, your indomitable victories." Therefore, to-day in the hour of struggle, when in your hands it lies to win victory for India, I, a weak woman, have come out of my home. I, a dreamer of dreams, have come into the market place, and I say: "Go forth, comrades, to victory."

Mrs. Naidu then started again on a tour to the north visiting Delhi, Jullunder and Lahore, Hyderabad (Sind) and other cities. She made speeches at every one of these centres, on education and other kindred topics. In September 1918, she attended the Bombay Special Congress and moved the resolution demanding Women Franchise.

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SOCIAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

In December last, she presided over the Second All-India Social Service Conference at Delhi and delivered an eloquent address, in the course of which she traced the varying conditions of Social Service in India. She discoursed on the ancient Hindu ideal of Dharma and concluded fittingly as follows:—

Delhi cannot die. Kings have died and have no more than broken tombs but the ideal of India, that spiritual ideal of service and sacrifice is focussed to you to-day from the broken temples, from the broken fortresses where the heroes have fought and died to vindicate the truth within them. And what was the truth, my friends, of which the city is not a grave but a temple? It is the truth of national consciousness of India, that Dharma, which is the ideal of Indian honour (cheers) and that Indian honour which can never be fulfilled in the least, till each one of you in a spirit of dedication become not merely the message but also the fulfilment of that national honour. (Loud and prolonged applause.)

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